

**VR-VN;  
VR-RN;  
VR-  
RN/APRN**

**Texas Board of Nursing**  
333 Guadalupe, Ste. 3-460, Austin, TX 78701-3944  
Phone: 512-305-7400 -- Web Site: [www.bon.state.tx.us](http://www.bon.state.tx.us)

**Volunteer Retired Nurse Authorization Form**

For Office Use Only:

Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Date Recd. \_\_\_\_\_

This form is only for retired health care practitioners whose only practice is voluntary charity care. Please refer to the instructions for assistance in completing this form. **You must answer all questions, sign and return the form as indicated with the fee of \$10.00.** Normal processing time is two weeks, whether delivered in person or by mail. It is your responsibility to submit the form and the required fee and allow sufficient time for processing. You must meet the requirements to practice as a Volunteer Retired Nurse in Texas, 22 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 217.9(d). The Rules pertaining to the maintenance of your license and your eligibility to renew this authorization are 22 TAC §§ 216 (CE) and 213.27 - 213.29 (regarding fitness to practice).

**(Must be 65 years of age or older to be considered for Volunteer Retired Authorization)**

**Select type of Authorization:**

☐ **VN Volunteer Retired**

☐ **RN Volunteer Retired**

☐ **RN/APRN Volunteer Retired**

Name(Last): \_\_\_\_\_ (First): \_\_\_\_\_ (M): \_\_\_\_\_

License Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
Mo Day Yr

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Address) (City) (State) (Zip Code)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(E-Mail Address)

In accordance with the Nursing Practice Act and 22 TAC §217.9, I declare that the State of \_\_\_\_\_  
is my primary state of residence and that such constitutes my permanent and principal home for legal purposes. ("Primary state of residence" is defined as the state of a person's declared fixed permanent and principal home for legal purposes; domicile.)

**Eligibility Questions - Answering the questions below and signing the form is mandatory**

- 1) ☐ **No** ☐ **Yes** Have you, within the past 24 months or since your last renewal, for any criminal offense, including those pending appeal:
- A. been convicted of a misdemeanor?
  - B. been convicted of a felony?
  - C. pled nolo contendere, no contest, or guilty?
  - D. received deferred adjudication?
  - E. been placed on community supervision or court-ordered probation, whether or not adjudicated guilty?
  - F. been sentenced to serve jail or prison time? court-ordered confinement?
  - G. been granted pre-trial diversion?
  - H. been arrested or have any pending criminal charges?
  - I. been cited or charged with any violation of the law?
  - J. been subject of a court-martial; Article 15 violation; or received any form of military judgment/punishment/action?

(You may only exclude Class C misdemeanor traffic violations or offenses previously disclosed to the Texas Board of Nursing on an initial licensure or renewal application.)

**NOTE: Expunged and Sealed Offenses:** While expunged or sealed offenses, arrests, tickets, or citations need not be disclosed, it is your responsibility to ensure the offense, arrest, ticket or citation has, in fact, been expunged or sealed. It is recommended that you submit a copy of the Court Order expunging or sealing the record in question to our office with your application. Failure to reveal an offense, arrest, ticket, or citation that is not in fact expunged or sealed, will at a minimum, subject your license to a disciplinary fine. Non-disclosure of relevant offenses raises questions related to truthfulness and character.

**NOTE: Orders of Non-Disclosure:** Pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code § 552.142(b), if you have criminal matters that are the subject of an order of non-disclosure you are not required to reveal those criminal matters on this form. However, a criminal matter that is the subject of an order of non-disclosure may become a character and fitness issue. Pursuant to other sections of the Gov't Code chapter 411, the Texas Board of Nursing is entitled to access criminal history record information that is the subject of an order of non-disclosure. If the Board discovers a criminal matter that is the subject of an order of non-disclosure, even if you properly did not reveal that matter, the Board may require you to provide information about any conduct that raises issues of character.

- 2) ☐ **No** ☐ **Yes** Are you currently the target or subject of a grand jury or governmental agency investigation?
- 3) ☐ **No** ☐ **Yes** Has any licensing authority refused to issue you a license or ever revoked, annulled, cancelled, accepted surrender of, suspended, placed on probation, refused to renew a nursing license, certificate, or multi-state privilege held by you now or previously, or ever fined, censured, reprimanded, or otherwise disciplined you? (You may exclude disciplinary actions previously disclosed to the Texas Board of Nursing on an initial licensure or renewal application.)
- 4) ☐ **No** ☐ **Yes** \*In the past 5 years, have you been diagnosed with or treated or hospitalized for schizophrenia or other psychotic disorder, bipolar disorder, paranoid personality disorder, antisocial personality disorder, or borderline personality disorder? (You may answer "No" if you have completed and/or are in compliance with TPAPN for mental illness OR you've previously disclosed to the Texas Board of Nursing and have remained compliant with your treatment regime and have had no further hospitalization since disclosure.)
- 5) ☐ **No** ☐ **Yes** \*In the past 5 years, have you been addicted or treated for the use of alcohol or any other drug? (You may answer "no" if you have completed and/or are in compliance with TPAPN)
- 6) I attest that I understand & meet all the requirements to practice for the type of renewal requested, as listed in 22 TAC, §216(CE). I understand that no one else may submit this form on my behalf and that I am accountable and responsible for the accuracy of any answer or statement on this form. Further, I understand that it is a violation of the 22 TAC, §217.12(6)(I) and the Penal Code, sec. 37.10, to submit a false statement to a governmental agency.

Sign: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(SIGNATURE REQUIRED)

\*Pursuant to the Occupations Code §301.207, information regarding a person's diagnosis or treatment for a physical condition, mental condition, or chemical dependency is confidential to the same extent that information collected as part of an investigation is confidential under the Occupations Code §301.466.

**NOTE: IF YOU ANSWERED "YES" TO #1-5 PLEASE REFER TO INSTRUCTIONS**

Revised 12/2009

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS - Continued

**If you answered yes to questions 1-5 of the Eligibility Questions on page 2, you must provide the Board with the following information:**

**QUESTION #1.** The Board has determined that criminal behavior is highly relevant to an individual's fitness to practice nursing. Therefore, all criminal convictions or deferred orders, prosecution, or adjudication-a determination by a court that is withheld or delayed for a specific time period, must be reported to the Board. This includes offenses under the law of another state, federal law, or the Uniform Code of Military Justice that contains elements of criminal conduct. SUBMIT a personal letter of explanation describing each incident, the behavior that led up to the criminal order and your conduct since the order, and any rehabilitative efforts that have been performed since the order. In addition, SUBMIT the following documentation for **all** felonies and for **all** misdemeanors:

Certified copies of:

1. charges (indictment, information, or complaint);
2. disposition of charges (Judgment, Order of Probation, Sentence, and/or Deferred orders); and
3. evidence that the conditions of the court have been met.

(To obtain this documentation, contact the county clerk in the jurisdiction where the order was issued for misdemeanors; district court clerk for felonies.)

You may answer "NO" to the question of prior convictions only if you: (a) received a pardon; or (b) were adjudicated as a minor without a finding of "delinquent conduct". If you were ever required to register as a sex offender, you must answer "YES".

If you have questions regarding the outcome of any criminal matter, consult your attorney.

**QUESTION #2.** The Nursing Practice Act provides that a person's conduct in violation of the Nursing Practice Act or rules of the board may be considered as a factor in its deliberations regarding fitness to practice nursing. Therefore, if a licensee or applicant is the subject of a grand jury or governmental agency investigation, the information regarding conduct or behavior giving rise to the investigation may be relevant in determining a violation of the Nurse Practice Act or lead to the admissibility of relevant evidence of such violation. If you are the subject of a grand jury or governmental agency investigation, please SUBMIT the name and address of the investigating entity and an explanation as to the basis of the investigation.

**QUESTION #3.** The Board has determined that if any licensing authority has taken disciplinary action against a person for any reason, then those actions are highly relevant to an individual's current ability to practice nursing in the state of Texas. If any licensing authority has refused to issue a license, revoked, annulled, cancelled, accepted surrender of, suspended, placed on probation, refused to renew a license, certificate, or multi state privilege held by you or previously fined, censured, reprimanded or otherwise disciplined you, SUBMIT the names and address of the licensing authority who has taken action and a letter explaining the background of the action. Additionally, SUBMIT certified copies of

1. formal charges or allegations supporting the licensure action;
2. final disposition of the licensing authority regarding those formal charges or allegations; and
3. evidence that the conditions of the licensing authority's order or requirements have been met.

**QUESTION #4.** The practice of professional nursing requires current fitness. The Board has identified certain disorders which, if occurring within the last 5 years, indicate a lack of fitness. The disorders are: schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders, bipolar disorder, paranoid personality disorder, anti-social personality disorder, or borderline personality disorder. If you have been diagnosed, treated or hospitalized for any of the above illnesses within the last 5 years, SUBMIT:

1. A report, on letterhead, from your physician, psychiatrist, psychologist or counselor, sent directly to this office, that includes: your diagnosis; treatments rendered; including current medications; prognosis; cognitive, affective, and emotional stability and continuing after-care recommendations, including reasonable accommodations needed to safely practice professional nursing, if any; and,
2. Verification of compliance with aftercare recommendations.

\*Pursuant to the Occupations Code §301.207, information regarding a person's diagnosis or treatment for a physical condition, mental condition, or chemical dependency is confidential to the same extent that information collected as part of an investigation is confidential under the Occupations Code §301.466.

**QUESTION #5.** The practice of professional nursing requires current sobriety and fitness. If you have been addicted to or treated for the use of alcohol or any other drug within the last five years, SUBMIT:

1. verification of treatment for substance abuse sent directly to the Board from the treatment center;
2. verification of compliance with aftercare recommendations;
3. evidence of continuing sobriety/abstinence, for example, current support group attendance; and
4. a personal letter of explanation with sobriety date and plan for relapse prevention.

\*Pursuant to the Occupations Code §301.207, information regarding a person's diagnosis or treatment for a physical condition, mental condition, or chemical dependency is confidential to the same extent that information collected as part of an investigation is confidential under the Occupations Code §301.466.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) - Volunteer Retired Nurse Authorization

(Do not return this sheet)

**(1) Q: Is the status “volunteer retired nurse” a special type of nursing license?**

**A:** Actually, it is not a “license.” It is considered a sub-category of the “Inactive” status for nursing licensure, and is an “authorization” that the Board may grant upon request to a nurse who meets criteria and pays the applicable fee for this designation.

**(2) Q: What rules apply to a nurse who is authorized as a volunteer retired nurse?**

**A:** A nurse seeking to attain/maintain authorization as a volunteer retired nurse must comply with three rules:

- §216.3(6) regarding reduced requirements for continuing education (10 hours of CE every two years; if VR-RN with APRN status, 20 hours of CE are required);
  - §217.9 regarding requirements to attain/maintain authorization as a volunteer retired nurse (possess unencumbered license, not perform any nursing duties for compensation, be at least 65 years old); and
  - §223.1(17) which specifies a fee of \$10.00 (ten) dollars each renewal period (2-years).
- The rules may be viewed in their entirety on the Board web page at <http://www.bon.state.tx.us>.

**(3) Q: What defines a “charitable organization”?**

**A:** A charitable organization is defined in Section 84.003 of the Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code [<http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/statutes/cp.toc.htm>] and includes “any bona fide charitable, religious, prevention of cruelty to children or animals, youth sports and youth recreational, neighborhood crime prevention or patrol, or educational organization (excluding fraternities, sororities, and secret societies), or other organization promoting the common good and general welfare for the people in a community, including these types of organizations with a Section 501(c)(3) or (4) exemption from federal income tax, some chambers of commerce, and volunteer centers certified by the Department of Public Safety.”

**(4) Q: What titles can a volunteer retired nurse use?**

**A:** A nurse who meets the requirements to be granted authorization as a volunteer retired nurse may use the following titles as specified in the NPA Section 301.261(e) and Rule 217.9(b):

- Volunteer Retired Vocational Nurse (VR-VN);
- Volunteer Retired Registered Nurse (VR-RN);
- Volunteer Retired Registered Nurse, with qualifications in a given advanced practice nurse role and specialty (ex: VR-RN, FNP)

**(5) Q: If a nurse’s license has been on inactive/retired status more than 4 years, would the nurse have to take a refresher course to obtain volunteer retired nurse authorization?**

**A:** Since volunteer retired nurse (VRN) status is not a “license” to practice nursing, a refresher course is not required; however, depending upon the specific nursing services that the VRN intends to provide, continuing education and/or a precepted clinical may be prudent to assure the VRN delivers care in a safe manner. In addition, an advanced practice nurse with VR-RN status may need to limit the level of care provided if he/she has been out of the advanced practice role/specialty for four (4) or more years.

**(6) Q: Will I still receive the *Texas Nursing Bulletin* (the Board’s quarterly newsletter) if I am authorized as a volunteer retired nurse?**

**A:** No. Copies of the Texas Nursing Bulletin are only mailed to nurses who maintain an active license; however, you may subscribe to receive copies of the quarterly newsletter for \$10/year. To subscribe, print a publications order form from the “Forms” section of the BNE web page, <ftp://www.bon.state.tx.us/pub-form.pdf>.

**(7) Q: Will I be subject to criminal background checks and FBI fingerprinting as a volunteer retired nurse?**

**A:** Since “volunteer retired nurse” is considered an inactive licensure status, the Board does not plan to seek criminal background checks on any nurse whose license is inactive.

**(8) Q: Will I receive notice that my volunteer retired nurse status is about to expire?**

A: Yes. Authorization as a volunteer retired nurse is valid for the same two-year interval as an active nursing license. For example, a nurse born in May of an even-numbered year (1948, 1952, etc.) would have to renew his/her authorization every even-numbered year by the end of May. A nurse born in an odd-numbered year would renew his/her authorization every odd-numbered year by the end of the nurse's birth month.

If a nurse should fail to renew his/her volunteer retired nurse (VRN) authorization prior to the expiration date, the nurse's status will revert to "inactive." If the nurse then wishes to reinstate his/her VRN status, the nurse would be required to send in proof of 10 hours of CE credit [VR-RN with APRN status must complete 20 hours of CE/2-year renewal period] within the previous 2-year period, along with the completed application <http://www.bon.state.tx.us/renewals.htm> and the \$10 fee.

**(9) Q: To what extent can an advanced practice nurse engage in his/her advanced role and specialty with only a volunteer retired nurse authorization?**

A: Some restrictions are evident in the rules. For example, Rule 221.4(a)(1) requires that a person possess a "valid, current, unencumbered license as a registered nurse..." in order to seek or retain authorization as an advanced practice nurse. Rule 221.9(b) further states that, "...the inactive advanced practice nurse may not utilize his/her limited prescriptive authority." These requirements are congruent with additional requirements in §222.5 and §222.6 relating to active licensure and advanced practice authorization requirements for prescribing either dangerous drugs or controlled substances. Laws outside of the jurisdiction of the BNE also preclude non-licensed practitioners from prescribing either dangerous or controlled substances [Texas Controlled Substances Act, §481.002(39)(D) and §483.001(12)(D) {definition of practitioner}].

As an additional clarification, an advanced practice nurse who has authorization as a volunteer retired nurse does not have to have 400 hours of active practice per biennium, nor does the APRN have to maintain national certification in his/her advanced practice role and specialty.

The responsibility and accountability would remain with the volunteer retired APRN to practice within his/her current competencies, recognizing limitations that may relate to lack of current knowledge/skill of the standard of care for a given medical condition, as well as inability to use prescriptive authority to prescribe medications. Factors such as the amount of ongoing volunteer practice, continuing education in the advanced practice role/specialty, and time out of active/full-time practice would need to be considered by the volunteer retired APRN in determining to what extent he/she should limit his/her practice.

**(10) Q: I plan to retire in 6 months and will be relocating out-of-state. Can I apply for volunteer retired nurse status if Texas will no longer be my primary state of residence?**

A: No. Volunteer retired nurse status can only be conferred upon a retired nurse who is able to claim Texas as his/her primary state of residence. This is stated in the Rule 217.9(d)(1)(B). The authorization is applicable to practice in the State of Texas. The authorization does not grant a multi-state privilege to practice in compact states.

**(11) Q: How can I verify if a nurse has current authorization as a volunteer retired nurse?**

A: Current authorization as a volunteer retired nurse may be verified through the BNE online verification system using either the nurse's social security number or previous nursing license number. A nurse holding current authorization as a volunteer retired nurse will have an indicator to that effect in the license "status" section.